

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE**

April 9, 2015

8:07 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Bob Lynn, Chair  
Representative Wes Keller, Vice Chair  
Representative David Talerico  
Representative Liz Vazquez  
Representative Louise Stutes  
Representative Max Gruenberg  
Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

All members present

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 22

Urging the Canada Border Services Agency to keep the border between Hyder, Alaska, and Stewart, British Columbia, open 24 hours a day.

- MOVED HJR 22 OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 180

"An Act establishing the second Sunday of June each year as Children's Day."

- MOVED HB 180 OUT OF COMMITTEE

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 6(FIN)

"An Act exempting the state from daylight saving time; petitioning the United States Department of Transportation to change the time zones of Alaska; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: HJR 22

SHORT TITLE: STEWART-HYDER BORDER HOURS

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) ORTIZ

04/02/15 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
04/02/15 (H) STA  
04/09/15 (H) STA AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106

BILL: HB 180

SHORT TITLE: JUNE 1 AS CHILDREN'S DAY

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) MUNOZ

04/02/15 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
04/02/15 (H) STA  
04/09/15 (H) STA AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106

BILL: SB 6

SHORT TITLE: ELIMINATE DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) MACKINNON

01/21/15 (S) PREFILE RELEASED 1/9/15  
01/21/15 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
01/21/15 (S) STA, FIN  
02/10/15 (S) STA AT 9:00 AM BUTROVICH 205  
02/10/15 (S) Moved SB 6 Out of Committee  
02/10/15 (S) MINUTE(STA)  
02/11/15 (S) STA RPT 5DP  
02/11/15 (S) DP: STOLTZE, COGHILL, HUGGINS, MCGUIRE,  
WIELECHOWSKI  
02/24/15 (S) FIN AT 9:00 AM SENATE FINANCE 532  
02/24/15 (S) Departments: Environmental Conservation  
and  
03/03/15 (S) FIN AT 9:00 AM SENATE FINANCE 532  
03/03/15 (S) Departments: Environmental Conservation  
and  
03/04/15 (S) FIN RPT CS 5DP 2NR NEW TITLE  
03/04/15 (S) DP: KELLY, MACKINNON, MICCICHE, BISHOP,  
HOFFMAN  
03/04/15 (S) NR: DUNLEAVY, OLSON  
03/11/15 (S) TRANSMITTED TO (H)  
03/11/15 (S) VERSION: CSSB 6(FIN)  
03/12/15 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
03/12/15 (H) STA  
03/16/15 (H) FIN REFERRAL ADDED AFTER STA  
04/02/15 (H) STA AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106  
04/02/15 (H) -- MEETING CANCELED --  
04/09/15 (H) STA AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106

**WITNESS REGISTER**

REPRESENTATIVE DAN ORTIZ  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** As prime sponsor, presented HJR 22.

MAILY MIRAMONTES  
Intern  
Representative Cathy Munoz  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Presented HB 180 on behalf of Representative Munoz, prime sponsor.

SENATOR ANNA MACKINNON  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** As prime sponsor, presented SB 6.

ERIN SHINE, Staff  
Senator Anna McKinnon  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Offered information on SB 6 on behalf of Senator MacKinnon, prime sponsor.

DONALD WESTLUND  
Ketchikan, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in opposition to SB 6.

SCOTT YAHR  
Glennallen, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified on behalf of himself in opposition to SB 6.

RON PHILEMONOFF  
St. Paul Island, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of SB 6.

PAULA RAK  
Wrangell, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in opposition to SB 6.

DUSTIN ADAMS, Board Chair  
Explore Fairbanks

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in opposition to SB 6.

GUS K. WAHL

Dillingham, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of SB 6.

DARWIN BIWER

Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in opposition to SB 6.

DAVID MEISMER

Salcha, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified on behalf of himself in support of the elimination of Daylight Saving Time proposed under SB 6.

RICH SAYERS

Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in opposition to SB 6.

PATTI MACKEY, President/CEO

Ketchikan Visitors Bureau

Ketchikan, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in opposition to SB 6.

RACHEL PETRO, CEO

Alaska State Chamber of Commerce

Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in opposition to SB 6.

ROSIE ROPPEL

Ketchikan, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in opposition to SB 6.

LYNN WILLIS

Eagle River, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of SB 6.

CRAIG FISHER

Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in opposition to SB 6.

CHELSEA GOUCHER, Executive Director

Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce

Ketchikan, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in opposition to SB 6.

TOM WILLIAMS, Financial Officer

Ward Air

Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in opposition to SB 6.

## **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[8:07:42 AM](#)

**CHAIR BOB LYNN** called the House State Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at 8:07 a.m. Representatives Keller, Stutes, Talerico, and Lynn were present at the call to order. Representatives Gruenberg, Kreiss-Tomkins, and Vazquez arrived as the meeting was in progress.

### **HJR 22-STEWART-HYDER BORDER HOURS**

[8:08:07 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN announced the first order of business was HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 22, Urging the Canada Border Services Agency to keep the border between Hyder, Alaska, and Stewart, British Columbia, open 24 hours a day.

[8:08:38 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DAN ORTIZ, Alaska State Legislature, as prime sponsor, presented HJR 22. He said Hyder, Alaska, is a community of about 87 residents that sits [near the southern tip of the Southeast Alaska "panhandle,"] on the border of the United States and Canada. Just across the border is the Canadian community of Stewart, British Columbia (BC), which is home to approximately 487 residents. Prior to April 1, 2015, there was 24-hour access through the border in both directions. As of April 1, the border is closed from midnight to 8 a.m., as a result of a decision made by the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA).

REPRESENTATIVE ORTIZ stated that the residents of Hyder rely on the community of Stewart for emergency services. The road also is the only evacuation route in the event of a tsunami or levy break. He noted that Senator Lisa Murkowski's office and his own office began working on the issue. He said he held a town meeting with residents of both communities [on March 28, 2015], where he heard further concerns. For example, a large part of Hyder's economy is based on tourism, particularly bear viewing, to which road access is necessary before 8 a.m. There is also an issue related to the access to mining, where Canadian workers must pass through Hyder and then back over the border to a Canadian mine, and access is needed during the hours the road is now closed.

[8:11:55 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE ORTIZ said HJR 22 asks the Alaska State Legislature to put forward a resolution asking the CBSA to reopen the border on a 24-hour basis, and to do so in the best interest of the residents of both Hyder and Stewart. He noted that at the aforementioned meeting, there were many residents from Stewart present, as well as those in Hyder, to express concerns. He said the CVSA has long-term plans to make access available across the border by means of a camera that could read identification, but HJR 22 would provide 24-access across the border until that happens.

[8:13:06 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE ORTIZ, in response to Chair Lynn, estimated that the drive from the Cassiar Highway to the border is about two hours.

CHAIR LYNN asked if anyone had thought of moving the border station to the east side of Stewart so that residents of Hyder and Stewart could move back and forth without a border crossing.

REPRESENTATIVE ORTIZ said he saw that idea in a letter from an organization, but said he was not sure where the CBSA or U.S. Customs officials would stand on that proposal.

CHAIR LYNN indicated that that type of border was, at one point, used between Mexico and Arizona and California. He asked Mr. Ortiz if he knew the current status of the borders in those areas.

REPRESENTATIVE ORTIZ answered no.

[8:14:42 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER asked about Representative Ortiz' reference to a gate.

REPRESENTATIVE ORTIZ explained that the gate that is used to close the border between Hyder and Stewart completely crosses the road. He said residents of Hyder who happened to be in Stewart past midnight would be "locked out" of their country.

[8:15:32 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN, after ascertaining no one further wished to testify, closed public testimony on HJR 22.

[8:15:42 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER moved to report HJR 22 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying zero fiscal note. There being no objection, HJR 22 was reported out of the House State Affairs Standing Committee.

CHAIR LYNN told the sponsor he would like him to explore the possibility of getting the actual border station moved to the eastern side of Stewart. He suggested both Hyder and Stewart could pay for the cost of the move, which he ventured would not be too great.

[8:16:26 AM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 8:16 a.m. to 8:17 a.m.

**HB 180-JUNE 1 AS CHILDREN'S DAY**

[8:17:37 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN announced that the next order of business was HOUSE BILL NO. 180, "An Act establishing the second Sunday of June each year as Children's Day."

[8:17:41 AM](#)

MAILY MIRAMONTES, Intern, Representative Cathy Munoz, Alaska State Legislature, presented HB 180 on behalf of Representative Munoz, prime sponsor. She said the proposed joint resolution would make the second Sunday of June "Children's Day." The reason is to let Alaskan children know that Alaskans think they are important, care for them, and value them. She emphasized the importance of society taking every opportunity to let children know that they are the future of the country and that "we depend on them."

MS. MIRAMONTES related that she grew up in Mexico where a day in April is set aside to celebrate children. She said the day was filled with fun activities, and family and friends gathered. She said the day was significant to her; as a child she always looked forward to it. She said some of her fondest childhood memories were formed on that day, and she opined that it would

be wonderful for children in Alaska to have those same, positive memories.

MS. MIRAMONTES stated that the positive impact of recognizing children on a special day would be long-lasting. She stated, "Constructive and positive memories could contribute for a better outcome to children's lives, and we should support any event that could contribute to this goal." She said Children's Day would give an opportunity to parents and members of the community to work on events that would reinforce the relationship to children. She said the country already celebrates Mother's Day in May and Father's Day in June, and recently added an Elder's Day, and adding Children's Day would complement those celebrations. She asked the committee to support HB 180.

[8:20:19 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN, after ascertaining no one further wished to testify, closed public testimony on HB 180.

[8:20:29 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER moved to report HB 180 out of committee with individual recommendations and a zero fiscal note. There being no objection, HB 180 was reported out of the House State Affairs Standing Committee.

[8:20:48 AM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 8:21 a.m. to 8:22 a.m.

**SB 6-ELIMINATE DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME**

[8:22:42 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN announced that the final order of business was CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 6(FIN), "An Act exempting the state from daylight saving time; petitioning the United States Department of Transportation to change the time zones of Alaska; and providing for an effective date."

CHAIR LYNN remarked that trying to change someone's mind on the issue of Daylight Saving Time is more difficult than getting someone to change his/her religion. He characterized the proposed legislation as important.

[8:23:54 AM](#)

SENATOR ANNA MACKINNON, Alaska State Legislature, as prime sponsor, presented SB 6. She said legislation to end Daylight Saving Time has been introduced five times. She indicated that she had carried the legislation before as a Representative, and now was carrying it as a Senator. She stated that Alaskans are passionate about the issue - both those in favor and those in opposition.

SENATOR MACKINNON said under SB 6, as of January 1, 2017, Alaska would no longer switch back and forth [from Daylight Saving Time to Alaska Standard Time], and the governor of Alaska would be instructed to send a letter to the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) to ask it to reassess Alaska's time zone. She clarified that the proposed legislation would not ask USDOT to split time zones, but ask "if we're in the right time zone." She said the best way to "make that case" would be to pass SB 6.

SENATOR MACKINNON related, "This bill was originally put in place to try to save energy." She said in Benjamin Franklin's day, the issue was about "wax and wicks" - how light was burned - but that issue does not hold true today. She said she had sent out a poll [entitled, "2015 Daylight Saving Time Poll, February 7-27, 2015"]. She said the issue of Daylight Saving has garnered a phenomenal response. She noted that when she had carried similar legislation as a Representative, 500 Alaskans from across the state shared different effects of Daylight Saving Time. In Northwest Alaska, teachers noted there was disruption in their classrooms during test-taking time in the beginning of March. In Southeast Alaska, people talked about needing additional daylight for floatplane operations. She indicated that healthcare providers had related issues with the time change and people who are bipolar and with the time change having an effect on some people's sleep that was different from jet lag. She mentioned a study done in Sweden that showed men had a greater risk of heart attack in the first few days coming out of Daylight Saving Time; although it was not characterized as a direct result of switching time, the study showed a "potential relationship" to the time change. She said data was available to share with the committee if requested. She said Australia's study mentioned heart attack and suicide rates. She said, "That's what originally took me towards looking at Daylight Saving Time."

[8:27:13 AM](#)

SENATOR MACKINNON related that she had served as the former executive director of Standing Together Against Rape (STAR), and she had observed "violence disproportionate to any other state in the union." She then worked for seven years at Hospice of Anchorage, where she saw people with higher rates of cancer and other terminal illnesses. She said she began work with the Alaska Suicide Prevention Council six years ago. Throughout her work with these organizations, she said she questioned why Alaska was always "at the wrong end of some of these statistics." One idea is that Alaska's high rates of violence and suicide may be connected to seasonal affective disorder and low light levels. She mentioned second-hand smoke as an example of an outside influence on social norms. She said she had no hard data regarding the effects of flipping time back and forth on suicide rates, but told committee members that whether or not they felt the effects of the time changes, "there may be members in Alaska that do."

[8:29:26 AM](#)

SENATOR MACKINNON talked about a cartoon, which she said illustrated that for babies, animals, and farmers, Daylight Saving Time is "outside of their norm" and was not something they requested; "they wake up in association when their body tells them to wake up."

[8:29:56 AM](#)

SENATOR MACKINNON relayed that the last time she had sponsored legislation regarding Daylight Saving Time, she heard from 500 people; this time she heard from 3,700. Of those that responded, some were highly opposed, while others were highly in favor. She said she made a point to engage entities that, in previous years, had been in opposition to the proposed change, for example: The Alaska State Chamber [of Commerce], the airline industry, and the cruise ship industry. She explained, "I wanted to make sure that there ... [was] real consideration for the challenges that our business community might face ... if we were to do this ... policy change." She reported that 78 percent of those that responded [to the aforementioned poll] wanted to eliminate Daylight Saving Time; 18.5 percent supported keeping Daylight Saving Time. In response to Chair Lynn, she said the poll was conducted via an on-line survey.

[8:31:45 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN asked the bill sponsor if she had conducted any scientific polling on the issue.

SENATOR MACKINNON answered no.

CHAIR LYNN expressed doubt that a survey has the same validity as a scientific poll. For example, he offered his understanding that Fox News puts out surveys to "a rather targeted audience."

SENATOR MACKINNON responded that she had never claimed the survey had the same validity as a scientific poll, but rather that it was "self-selecting." She mentioned a survey done when she was a Representative, which was statistically valid and showed 52 percent of Alaskans in support of the elimination of Daylight Saving Time. Referring again to the 2015 survey, she relayed that [54.8] percent of the population that responded was from Southcentral Alaska; 26.5 percent was from the Interior; and 15.1 percent was from Southeast Alaska. She recognized that the proposed bill was a policy decision that would affect individuals and businesses. As shown in the poll, the support by region showed as follows: 74.2 percent in the Far North; 85.9 percent in the Interior; 75.7 percent in Southwest; 81.2 percent in Southcentral; and 53.7 percent in Southeast. She said she had anticipated the majority of Southeast Alaska would have been in opposition. She added, "And ... I believe they represent approximately 10 percent of the population and 15 of the population of the survey. So, again, not statistically valid, but certainly telling."

[8:34:07 AM](#)

SENATOR MACKINNON said there are concerns related to flipping back and forth between times during the year, which include correlations between [road] safety and vehicle collisions; work place environments and accidents; and school attendance and a drop in test scores. She indicated that a study showed that Indiana experienced an increased cost in energy when it "went off of Daylight Saving Time." She said Arizona has functioned well off of Daylight Saving Time.

[8:34:49 AM](#)

SENATOR MACKINNON said Alaska's banking community has asserted that under SB 6, it would be difficult for them to participate in financial markets. She added, "At least the general public has spoken about this." She stated her belief that technology has advanced in that regard, such that people could effectively

invest and manage money from Alaska, "no matter on Daylight Saving Time or off Daylight Saving Time." She offered for consideration that investors invest in a world market, which holds other challenges. Referring to pilots concerned about flying during the "twilight zone," she noted, "Alaska gains and loses so much light, so quickly, that there is a brief period of time where that is a ... statistically valid argument. Anywhere from 10-21 days in the fall would be the time - in at least the floatplane argument - for landing or flying."

SENATOR MACKINNON asked the committee to consider the policy decision "in how it affects people and how it affects business."

[8:36:11 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN noted that the sponsor had mentioned a study conducted in Sweden. He mentioned a 2012 study from the University of Alabama that alleged that switching between Daylight Saving Time and Standard Time could cause up to a 10 percent surge in heart attacks. He asked Senator MacKinnon if she was familiar with that study.

SENATOR MACKINNON answered no.

CHAIR LYNN questioned how many studies may have been done. He further questioned whether setting clocks back in the fall would result in "a corresponding decrease in heart attacks."

SENATOR MACKINNON said she could not speculate. She continued as follows:

That is true for car accidents - when you plunge people into darkness - for Alaska, because we go there very quickly, and then we recover very quickly, too. So, when you go in, we have an uptick, and when you go out into daylight, you have the uptick the other direction. But overall, some of the studies are pointing to increase, even on the balance of it all.

CHAIR LYNN said he knows that "clocks do matter." He related the effects of ever-changing shifts he worked when in the U.S. Army on his circadian rhythm.

[8:38:27 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER related his experience working a number of summers in the Arctic, where he said clocks were insignificant.

He emphasized his interest in "the petition that's going to [US]DOT." He asked the bill sponsor to expound on the procedure. He asked if there may be other ways to "put more weight behind it."

SENATOR MACKINNON responded that she had asked the governor to request the U.S. Department of Transportation to initiate a discussion with Alaskan communities about Alaska's time. She said this would afford each region the opportunity to make its case and for the state as a whole to determine its best time zone. She said she had no interest in dividing Alaska into multiple time zones; it currently operates on two. Senator MacKinnon offered her understanding that after that point, it would be outside of Alaskans' hands, except to engage in that federal process. She said Alaska would remain on Alaska Standard Time, which meant for five months of the year, Alaska would be one hour off Seattle time and four hours off the time on the East Coast, but during Daylight Saving Time, without changing its clocks, Alaska would be two hours off Seattle's time and five hours off the time on the East Coast. She said she understands that "most Alaskans don't want that disconnect." She offered her understanding that the federal government considers only the issue of commerce in making a time zone change. She continued as follows:

... We made our case already to be on Alaska Standard Time. If we're making our case after we come off Daylight Saving Time, it seems to me we'd have a new interest in having a conversation about which time zone we should be on: Should we be on Alaska Standard Time or should we do something else? I wouldn't proposed to insert my belief on Alaskans; I believe they have to make that decision. But that would be a conversation that we ... may be able to back up if we pass a resolution in support of a particular time zone - if we thought it was best to stay, as a legislature, on Alaska [Standard] Time zone, we might want to do that. If we thought we should be on Pacific Standard ... Time zone, then we could make a case to that. But outside of that, I don't know another way, except engaging, as a Representative or Senator ... in the conversation, as [US]DOT came forward into Alaska to make those findings.

[8:42:17 AM](#)

ERIN SHINE, Staff, Senator Anna McKinnon, Alaska State Legislature, on behalf of Senator MacKinnon, prime sponsor, stated that the aforementioned process with the U.S. Department of Transportation is addressed in Section 2 of the proposed legislation, which would request the governor to submit the application 21 days after passage of SB 6. She said the process would take six months to a year for the federal process, including meetings and a public comment period, after which USDOT would make a final recommendation as to what time zone Alaska should be on or if time zone boundaries would be moved.

MS. SHINE, in response to Representative Keller's query as to whether there may be a better option, said the sponsor's office had asked Legislative Legal and Research Services to draft a bill proposing adoption of Daylight Saving Time year-round; however, the 1966 Uniform Time Act does not allow that to happen. She clarified that the only options are to adopt Daylight Saving Time or eliminate it. The proposed legislation would [eliminate Daylight Saving Time, thus Alaska would remain year-round on Alaska Standard Time.]

[8:43:51 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER explained that he was questioning whether the effort under SB 6 was enough or whether the effort could be enhanced, for example, by contacting Alaska's delegation, furthering the focus of the issue within a subcommittee, or by knocking on doors. He emphasized that he was in support of what the sponsor was trying to accomplish.

SENATOR MACKINNON reiterated that a resolution could be passed. She indicated that SB 6 was the first step, and the proposed effective date would allow ample time to engage in the process, so that "businesses would not be as adversely affected."

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER directed attention to language on page 2, line 3, which asks USDOT to hold hearings, and he suggested it could offer the option to "gather input from Alaskans." He explained that USDOT may balk at being asked to hold hearings.

[8:45:34 AM](#)

MS. SHINE said she had asked USDOT if it had the necessary funding to send someone to Alaska to hold hearings, and she was told USDOT felt it would be possible to do that. She said USDOT "did the same process" in 2005, in response to Indiana's petition to change its time zone boundaries when it "went onto

Daylight Saving Time." She added, "They went through the process, and they did that then."

[8:46:37 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN noted that he had received "a lot of pushback from the business community," and he offered his understanding that other members of the committee had, as well. He asked how deeply the sponsor had vetted the business community regarding the issue.

SENATOR MACKINNON answered that her office had sent e-mails with specific requests. She said she had met with the cruise ship industry; with the broadcasters association, from both large and small stations; and with pilots. She indicated that she had given these entities a heads up regarding the current meeting. She emphasized that the issue being addressed under SB 6 was about her constituents that had been "adversely affected by switching their clocks back and forth." She stated that the bill was about people. She said, "[We] didn't have a lot of businesses jump up and down about trying to change the time zones." She continued as follows:

I think that it's a fair policy discussion that the business community can be affected by this, and we need to consider that very much. For me, I just raised the higher issue - as we're seeing more studies going on regarding health - that there might be some causation effect. And I'm not asserting that it's a silver bullet, because it's not; I'm just saying that there is more...

SENATOR MACKINNON said the people who approached her with the idea for the legislation were "just tired of changing their clocks," felt that it was a waste of time to do so. She said, "They do not understand why the government is in the business of telling them when the sun comes up ... at the same time every day and we change a clock to tell them so." She reiterated that teachers in classrooms witness disruption and do not understand the need for [Daylight Saving Time], and now there are indications that show it hurts test scores. She said she thinks the business community would support the entire nation doing away with Daylight Saving Time. She said she contacted Alaska's delegation about the issue. She commented on the difficult nature of addressing issues in Congress, because of the number of people with differing passionate views. She said the largest opposition group she had identified is the retail industry and

bars and restaurants, which all benefit from it being light out after people get off work, because people spend more when there is daylight. She talked about how much more energy she has with the summer light, than during the dark hours of winter. She concluded, "It's our nature to be associated with the climate that's around us and the sun that raises ... every morning and sets every evening."

8:49:52 AM

CHAIR LYNN acknowledged that the sponsor was carrying the bill in response to her constituents. Regarding the business community, he stated that it seems somebody had hired a lobbyist to oppose SB 6. He questioned why the business community would spend "something like \$10,000" to oppose SB 6 unless it was "pretty important to them." He added, "It's even on [television] (TV) now."

SENATOR MACKINNON said, "The hired campaign to continue the status quo is affective in generating support." She said the 3,700 that support elimination of Daylight Saving Time do not have that luxury, but instead have her as their spokesperson. She mentioned a chamber survey with a large group in opposition, which she offered her understanding was self-selecting. She said members of the Alaska State Chamber of Commerce have contacted her directly to inform her of the information it is generating. She indicated that the chamber wants the committee to know that its members are not unanimous in their support or opposition, and they believe there will be "some period of time that people will adjust." She said that is why the bill proposes a year and a half for the effective date and why it would be important for the bill to move in 2015, so that everyone has the maximum amount of time to adjust and respond.

8:52:10 AM

REPRESENTATIVE VAZQUEZ noted that many people had called or written in to her office - most in opposition. She said the key issue was for those who have to communicate with the Lower 48 for business and, under SB 6, would experience an increase in the time difference to the West Coast and East Coast from one to two hours and from four to five hours, respectively. She opined that a "beautiful" solution would be if U.S. Congress [did away with Daylight Saving Time for the entire country]. She stated that she was currently was leaning toward not supporting SB 6. She suggested a resolution from the House and Senate could be sent to Congress. Representative Vazquez acknowledged there

have been studies done related to Daylight Saving Time's effect on a person's body, and how it affects students. She suggested, though, that many students have to start the school day "way too early," and "their natural clocks are not in tune with that." She said she saw the merits of the proposed legislation, but wondered if "we could somehow nudge Congress."

[8:54:37 AM](#)

SENATOR MACKINNON responded that someone has to take the first step, and everyone is in a standoff. She stated she believes in the people of Alaska and in the state's business community, and she did not want to create a barrier between the two. She related that Dan Cuddy, [then Chairman of the Board] of the First National Bank Alaska, was the first person to send a letter of support for SB 6. She said she knows that the business community is rallying in opposition and that Alaskans are divided on the issue, but she reiterated that they are divided "in a positive way." She stated that her overall belief is that 52 percent of Alaskans want the elimination, and there is a higher representation throughout the business community in opposition to the proposed legislation. Regarding Chair Lynn's mention of lobbyists being hired, she relayed that she has been called, "the powerful co-chair of Senate Finance." She said she was given the position and "given a bag that had nothing in it." She said it has been a difficult year, but opined that nothing had happened in the Senate Finance Committee in which people could not take pride. She suggested the incentive to hire advocates may be in the belief that she somehow would use some perceived power in a way that was less than honorable. She emphasized that would not be the case.

[8:57:02 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN related that he has children living in Florida and Indiana, and a five-hour time difference would make it more difficult for him to talk to them.

[8:57:27 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE VAZQUEZ clarified that no lobbyist had contacted her - only numerous constituents.

[8:57:52 AM](#)

SENATOR MACKINNON explained that she needed to leave to be present at another committee hearing, but her staff would remain to hear the public testimony for SB 6.

CHAIR LYNN noted that Alaska currently was in a fiscal crisis, and he questioned whether the effect under SB 6 on businesses would add to that crisis.

SENATOR MACKINNON said the business community would express its belief about the possible effect of SB 6. She opined that the business community is resilient and has been able to survive other laws that have affected it in the past. She reiterated that the policy decision to be made was about people, but the legislature must keep in mind how such a decision may affect the business community.

[8:59:22 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN opened public testimony on SB 6.

[8:59:41 AM](#)

DONALD WESTLUND corrected the bill sponsor's previous statement that there are currently two time zones in Alaska. He said in addition to Aleutian and Alaska Standard Times, Metlakatla runs on Pacific Standard Time. He said the elimination of Daylight Saving Time would make it impossible for him to fly from Ketchikan to visit family in Iowa in one day. Currently, during Alaska Standard Time, if he flies out in the morning, he does not connect with the flights from Seattle eastward and has to spend the night in Seattle; it's only when he takes a 5 p.m. flight out of Ketchikan that he can continue to Iowa, but arriving at midnight. He said he would like the governor to send a request to [USDOT] to assign Alaska to Pacific Standard Time, because "that way, everybody would be at least in line with the West Coast, where we do most of our business." Regarding the survey, he indicated that it represents less than one percent of Alaska's population; therefore, "it can't be very accurate."

[9:02:41 AM](#)

SCOTT YAHR stated that although he manages a radio station, which drives his concern regarding the proposed legislation, he was testifying on behalf of himself. He urged the committee to vote no on SB 6. He said the current time separation of four hours makes doing business [with the East Coast] tricky, but "to

have our times different from winter to summer makes doing business even more difficult; it alienates Alaskans from the rest of the country even more, and it will put Alaskans at a disadvantage." He said the radio he manages in Glen Allen tapes national call-in programs. If the time does not change with the rest of the country, it would have to change its programming time twice a year, which would upset the station's listeners, or multiply the work of the station's two staff members by forcing them to record the program the day before in order to play it back on air at the same scheduled time 24 hours later. However, that would mean that the station's listeners would not be able to "engage in the national conversation that takes place on these programs." He indicated that the proposed legislation would affect broadcasting across Alaska, which would affect Alaskans personally, because they expect programs to air at certain times, in alignment with the rest of the country. Mr. Yahr opined that Daylight Saving Time is "pretty much useless"; however, as long as the majority of the country is partaking in it, Alaska needs to align itself so that it does not alienate Alaskans, Alaskan businesses, and Alaskan broadcasters.

[9:04:55 AM](#)

RON PHILEMONOFF stated that he is involved with businesses in Anchorage, and is also the CEO of an Alaskan business. In response to Chair Lynn, he said the business is an Alaska Native corporation, which is involved in tourism, the fisheries industry, environmental cleanup work, telecommunications, and the wind power industry. He stated that many people living on the west coast of Alaska, including St. Paul, Bering Sea communities, and those on the Aleutian Islands support the elimination of Daylight Saving Time, because they think it does not really work as intended. He said, "In our case, it actually wastes more daylight than it saves ...." He stated support for SB 6, which speaks beyond the issue of whether there is more or less daylight; it addresses economic interests and concerns related to safety, health, and education.

MR. PHILEMONOFF indicated that teachers and parents know that children suffer every morning when they get up to go to [school] in the dark. Further, he said documentation shows that they do not study well in the dark. He said he heard that health concerns related to changing clocks has been documented, such as incidence of heart attack.

MR. PHILEMONOFF said his focus in testifying was on safety and economics. He said the Pribilof Islands are "technically four

time zones away from everybody else." With Daylight Saving Time, the area is off by five time zones. He indicated that automatic computer technology switches cell phones used in the Pribilof Islands to "Adak Time," which is the same as Hawaiian Standard Time. He opined that man's manipulation of time zones has made things worse. He said the switch in time two times a year decreases his productivity and makes him feel like he has a hangover for about a week each time. He said there are body changes that happen when switching from a body clock to a manmade time zone. He said the Bering Sea is a great ocean, and Mother Nature releases wind onto the sea; it is the place where the show, "The Deadliest Catch," is filmed. He said residents already deal with the fury of the elements and "for us to be forced to work in the dark arbitrarily only makes it more deadly." He said residents don't see the daylight sometimes until 10 a.m. or 11 a.m., and making the switch in time only makes that worse. He said he had seen advertisement by the cruise ship industry trying to convince Alaskans of the merit of Daylight Saving Time; however, he thinks the industry is wrong. Mr. Philemonoff said he has heard the argument that Alaska needs to stay nearer to the time zones of Seattle and the East Coast, but he opined that is just "scare tactics." He said that may have been a concern 20 years ago, but now people have the ability to leave a voice mail, send an e-mail, or make a wire transfer.

[9:10:53 AM](#)

MR. PHILEMONOFF said other states have considered this issue. He said Hawaii had opted out of Daylight Saving Time, and he offered his understanding that either Arizona or New Mexico had done the same. He said Washington was considering it. He encouraged Alaska to take the lead in doing away with Daylight Saving Time. He said he did not have the money to pay for a lobbyist, but opined that lobbyists do not "speak for the people." He urged the committee to listen to the people and not "the big dollar." He reiterated that he had testified on a personal level, as well as from the viewpoint of a business person, and he stated that the proposed legislation needed to be passed in order to "go back to reality." In response to Chair Lynn, he confirmed that although he was involved in business, he had testified on behalf of himself.

[9:13:00 AM](#)

PAULA RAK testified in opposition to SB 6. She said that in the past, when Alaska lowered the number of time zones it had,

Southeast Alaskans, who wanted to stay on Pacific Time, were told that "this was a compromise" that would "unify Alaska." She indicated that the Anchorage area also had to compromise back then, except that it gained an hour in the evening and Juneau lost an hour. She said the proposed legislation was asking for further compromise, which would put Anchorage "back to where they started from before all this happened," which she stated seemed unfair. Ms. Rak said the bill sponsor argues that the proposed legislation is for health reasons, but she said she does not agree, because she has seen studies that support that idea and others that say a person's health is not affected by Daylight Saving Time. She reasoned that if it were true that Daylight Saving Time was detrimental to a person's health, then so, too, would be the effect of changing time zones when flying back to Alaska from Seattle or just staying up an hour later. She said she finds that hard to believe.

MS. RAK stated that time zones are set up for the convenience of commerce. Southeast Alaska businesses have said they do not want to lose an hour of daylight in the evening, because it would hurt their commerce, and she said that is what needs to be considered. She mentioned an amendment to SB 6 that would allow time zones, such that Southeast Alaska could be on Pacific Time; however, she said she had not heard a lot of talk about that and had "a feeling that that'll just go away." She said she would not mind doing away with Daylight Saving Time if there was also [a time zone change], because then at least Southeast Alaska would be on the same time zone as Seattle, at least part of the year. She suggested that instead of petitioning the federal government to eliminate Daylight Saving Time, the legislature should send a resolution stating that it would like the entire country to be unified, in terms of Daylight Saving Time.

[9:16:09 AM](#)

DUSTIN ADAMS, Board Chair, Explore Alaska, named the following visitor activities that take advantage of the extended daylight in the evenings: flight seeing, float plane trips, fishing, wildlife viewing, hiking, and touring. He said the elimination of Daylight Saving Time would have an adverse economic impact on tourism businesses that conduct evening activities, especially in the waning hours in August and September, which he said are among the busiest months for the tour industry.

[9:17:12 AM](#)

GUS K. WAHL stated his support of SB 6. He said, "Southeast, of course, would like to keep ... the situation the way it is, because they're on natural time, and that's what we would like to have, is to be on natural time." He said he operates a business in Dillingham, and "because two o'clock in the morning is midnight," he feels like he has to keep working to take advantage of the daylight in the evenings, which makes him tired in the mornings. He stated that he could not get used to "being out of synch with nature." He said the testifier from the Pribilof Islands "pretty much covered my way of thinking."

9:18:47 AM

DARWIN BIWER specified that although he owns a bar in Anchorage and is the chairman of the Alaska Cabaret, Hotel, Restaurant and Retailer's Association, Inc. ("Alaska CHARR"), he was testifying on behalf of himself. He said in 1972, he was an area biologist for the Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) and managed the Bristol Bay commercial fishery. During that year, time zones were changed: Southeast ran on Pacific Standard Time; Yakutat ran on "Yukon Time"; Anchorage ran on Alaska Standard Time; and then there was "Aleutian Time." He said it was problematic, because the time zone between the Aleutian Time and Alaska Time "came right down through the middle of Bristol Bay." He explained this meant half of his field camps were in one time zone, while the other half were in another. He continued as follows:

Well, we had radio schedules back then that we had to call in our escapement count so, as biologists, we could open and close the commercial fishery so we had proper management of that fishery. This caused a lot of problems because they also overlapped with the Cook Inlet field camp schedules. So, it was very confusing because fisherman who were going to transfer from one district within Bristol Bay to another district had a 48-hour waiting period. Well, which time zone were they in? It got very, very complicated. If Southeast did move and the vertical demarcation between different time zones went down through Southeast, this could cause a lot of trouble with our fisheries there as well. So, I think this is a problem that really needs to be addressed. We are completely against doing away with the Daylight Saving Time.

MR. BIWER said the business community in which he currently works deals with outdoor activities, including golf courses,

flight seeing, sport fishing charters, paragliding, "zip-lining," bars and restaurants with sun decks, and wild life viewing. Many businesses contact businesses outside of Alaska to get assistance with computers, speaker installation, or mechanical device repair, and the elimination of Daylight Saving Time would make it more difficult to contact those businesses. He said the general public enjoys outdoor activities, as well.

MR. BIWER noted that in 2015, Daylight Saving Time runs from March 8 to November 1. He said the biggest argument for getting rid of Daylight Saving Time is that Alaska has plenty of light already. He said that is true in the latter weeks of June through the early weeks of July. He opined, "We shouldn't be getting rid of this just because people are too lazy to change their clocks." He indicated that people would change their minds about doing away with Daylight Saving Time once they realized how negatively doing so would impact businesses. He questioned studies that would indicate health problems related to Daylight Saving Time, because the one-hour difference when flying between Alaska and Washington has not caused a lot of heart attacks. He concluded, "I'm completely against this; I think it should be stopped right where it is."

[9:24:05 AM](#)

DAVID MEISMER said he is a 40-year resident of Alaska testifying on behalf of himself in support of the elimination of Daylight Saving Time, because he opined it is ridiculous, stressful, and confusing to have to change clocks twice a year. He said that in Minnesota, he has a business, apartments, property, and family, and he sees no problem in eliminating Daylight Saving Time. He stated his belief that other states would follow. He concluded, "I believe one hour difference in Alaska, one way or t'other, without having to change that twice a year - I believe people will get used to that and work with it. I know I will; I can."

[9:25:48 AM](#)

RICH SAYERS testified in opposition to SB 6, because he said it would create hardship on his business. He relayed that he is the general manager of a golf course in Anchorage. He said the proposed legislation would affect all activities for which daylight after work is a necessity, whether that is someone's business or personal activity, such as hiking a trail. He said the busiest time for the golf course is in the evening, "after work" - the busiest hour being from 5:00 p.m. to 6 p.m. He

explained that under SB 6, "those people that are playing golf at 5:30 p.m. would still be at work at 4:30 p.m., and that busiest hour would be taken away." He said he could not imagine how businesses, such as The Lucky Wishbone, J.C. Penny, ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc., would survive, with their busiest hour taken away. He said he estimates over \$230,000 lost in revenue for the golf course and facility. He said the facility has developed a Wacky Women Executive Week, for which it has garnered national awards, and, under SB 6, participants in the event would have one hour less to play, which would result in "a severe drop-off." He said local vendors would suffer from the golf course's lack of revenue, because he would spend less money on them and throughout the Anchorage economy. Mr. Sayers said he employs 120 throughout the summer, but if he lost that revenue and the time for people to enjoy the facility, he would have fewer jobs to offer. He said he also interacts with several companies on the East Coast, such as clothing vendors and a software provider. Currently, communications with them must be made before 1 p.m.; under SB 6, that would be one less hour. He said visitors from everywhere come to play golf under the midnight sun, and they go on cruises, rent cars, and stay in hotels. That could not happen if there is no midnight sun.

[9:29:24 AM](#)

MR. SAYERS indicated that when he saw that the proposed legislation had passed [the Senate], he spoke with people who said they supported getting rid of Daylight Saving Time, and almost all of them - once they realized how they would lose an hour of light in the evening, during which they could be walking their dogs, cooking outdoors, and play sports - changed their minds. He said he thinks that would also be the case if that information had been part of the survey and people taking the survey realized how things would change. He said, "The fall would experience a three-week change. The daylight we have on September 15th would then become the daylight on August 26th." He said all the activities that occur in the evening "would take a three-week hit." He warned that the proposed legislation would have a negative effect on the state's economy, which he said the state could not endure at this point in its history.

[9:31:25 AM](#)

PATTI MACKEY, President/CEO, Ketchikan Visitors Bureau (KVB), noted that KVB had sent a resolution to the committee to express concerns about the proposed legislation. In response to a previous testifier's reference to the cruise industry, she said,

"The cruise lines will do what the cruise lines will do." She stated, "But when over 93 percent of businesses in Ketchikan that cater to the tourism trade are residents of the state of Alaska or Ketchikan, it is a very big concern to my community." She said Ketchikan's unique problem regarding the proposed legislation is not so much about the time zone as it is about "the time in hours away." She said SB 6 would put Ketchikan at a disadvantage in securing the tourist trade from visitors that are on ships that are leaving Alaska. She explained that 50 percent of the ships that visit Ketchikan are doing so at the end of their voyage, and under SB 6, those ships would have to leave one hour earlier. Based on last year's figures, she estimated that Ketchikan could lose \$9 million, just in sales of products and services; that figure does not include municipal sales tax and other revenues that would be lost as a result of a shorter port stay. She relayed that in 2016 and beyond, there would be an increase in the number of people visiting Ketchikan. She concluded, "This is ... a very serious concern to the business economy of Ketchikan, and I would just urge the committee to please keep that in consideration as you consider this bill."

RACHEL PETRO, CEO, Alaska State Chamber of Commerce (ASCC), relayed that ASCC represents businesses throughout the state and is the only industry association that represents every industry sector in the state. She said ASCC also represents almost 40 local chambers of commerce throughout Alaska, and it serves as representative to the National Association of Manufacturers in Alaska.

MS. PETRO said the purpose of ASCC is to create a viable and thriving economy in Alaska; therefore, its members are focused on policies that support that goal. She indicated she had also sent a letter to the committee. She stated that businesses are not currently experiencing a problem with Daylight Saving Time. She explained that she knew that because each year ASCC asks its members what issues need to be addressed as a statewide business community, and Daylight Saving Time is not an issue that is raised. She surmised that the reaction to the proposed legislation being heard today was because "changing will have an effect." She said, "We wouldn't be here unless this ... had been brought up."

MS. PETRO stated that in 2009, ASCC surveyed its business members, and over 70 percent of them did not support a change [to Daylight Saving Time]. Today, ASCC still does not support "moving Alaska further away and changing those time zones." She

said ASCC would be "very supportive" of a national change. She said not every business would be affected equally; therefore, some businesses would not be weighing in on the proposed legislation. She stated ASCC's belief that [the negative effects of] eliminating Daylight Saving Time would outweigh any potential benefits.

[9:37:19 AM](#)

MS. PETRO referred to Ms. Mackey's testimony about the potential loss of \$9 million a year, and said Ketchikan is expecting even more visitors this year, so that could be a serious impact. She reminded the committee that this number was in regard to local businesses - not the cruise ship industry. She surmised that everyone who had testified would be fine with a nationwide elimination of Daylight Saving Time, but she reiterated that ASCC opposes SB 6.

[9:38:42 AM](#)

ROSIE ROPPEL stated that she has lived in Ketchikan since 1954, before Alaska was a state and before Ketchikan separated from Pacific Standard Time. She stated that she has been an educator for 35 years in Ketchikan. She explained that although she was testifying on behalf of herself, her observations working with students in schools and parents after school has something to do with her opposition to the proposed elimination of Daylight Saving Time in Alaska. She pointed out that Ketchikan is 700-plus miles from Anchorage, south in latitude, and "more in longitude with Seattle." She indicated that back when Alaska had been on the same time as the Pacific Coast, sunset was at 9:30 p.m. After switching to Alaska Standard Time, [during Daylight Saving Time] the sunset is at 8:30 p.m. Under SB 6, sunset would be at 7:30 p.m. She said that is a lot of time to lose. She stated, "Little kids are going to be walking home in the dark."

MS. ROPPEL, regarding the concern about health, said she knows that kids like to start school later and stay up later. She said, "I'm a secondary and university level teacher, and I know that that does affect test scores. We also know that food, prior to taking a test affects test scores." She stated her belief that "any study can prove anything you want," but educators know that it has been proven repeatedly that children really need to go to school later, but because of bus schedules and other factors, that does not happen. She said she is "like the Anchorage people that like to recreate outside." She

speculated that most Alaskans do. She said she knows that the people living in Alaska's rail belt and in Bristol Bay don't experience the same issues with light that people in Ketchikan do.

[9:41:13 AM](#)

MS. ROPPEL said although she understands the business standpoint of having one time zone, she would like see Southeast Alaska's 70,000 be put back on Pacific Standard Time. She reiterated that she would like Ketchikan to [continue to use Daylight Saving Time].

[9:42:09 AM](#)

LYNN WILLIS, testified in support of SB 6. He said five similar bills had been introduced in previous legislatures, since 1999, but despite some legislative progress, all of them were "held to death" before various committees, "where hearing a final committee decision was denied." He questioned what other state issue had been so vetted over time. He continued as follows:

Now, after all that inquiry, what is the clear and compelling reason to force the entire state population of Alaska - except for those residing in the Hawaiian/Aleutian time zone, to change the time of day twice each year and deal with what amounts to state-mandated jetlag. Only energy savings are mentioned as a public benefit Congress found would be seen by using Daylight Saving Time. Any other public benefit is described by using the words "may" or "should." What energy savings, due to the use of Daylight Saving Time, are being realized by Alaskans? If they were there, you would have heard it. Daylight Saving Time is not intended primarily to enhance commerce; time zones are intended to enhance commerce, and SB 6 allows for that discussion. Alaskans must pursue their endeavors when their efforts are required; therefore, how can you, with any sense of fairness, favor one profession or practice over another by forcing an entire state population to support what arguably amounts to the personal convenience or financial benefit of a few. You cannot make a period of daylight any longer by simply changing the time of day. Remember: for every hour you delay sunset, you equally delay sunrise the next morning. Morning light is just as important to some Alaskans as evening light

is to others. Besides, we live in the land of the midnight sun, where naturally changing daylight quickly offsets any artificial delay in the time of sunset.

Alaska's constitution grants the right of privacy, so how can you be affording Alaskans that constitutional right when you insist that the state government enter their home at 2 a.m., twice each year, to force them to change the time of day for no clear compelling reason? So, after seeing all the private efforts, my optimism is jaded. I request you move this bill from your committee or offer a specific justification of why you won't. Thank you.

[9:44:53 AM](#)

CRAIG FISHER specified that although he is a small business owner, he was testifying on behalf of himself. He explained that he came before the committee in person to show how important the issue is to him and because the real-time interaction regarding SB 6 is important. He said that is what drives his opposition to SB 6. He explained that he has customers, vendors, and partners all over the country, and interacting with them in real time is important. When he shows up at work at 8:30 a.m., it is already 12:30 p.m. in New York, which leaves about four hours - a concentrated time - to do business with those on the East Coast. He said he has staff that have to be ready to take on line training at 4 a.m., because it starts at 8 a.m. on the East Coast. He said [without Daylight Saving Time], a 3 a.m. start time would be necessary, and is "just one thing worse." He indicated that he would support the entire country doing away with Daylight Saving Time. He said, "I want to see that we stay in synch, as closely as possible, with the rest of the country." I don't want to have to look at a calendar to find out what time it is in Seattle, and - more importantly - I don't want my business partners in New York to have to do the same." In response to Chair Lynn, Mr. Fisher said he owns a consulting firm.

[9:47:45 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN noted that there were seven others waiting to testify, but he wished to pause to make some comments about SB 6. He opined that there had been interesting testimony about an important bill, with a lot of ramifications. He noted that [the first half of the Twenty-Ninth Legislative Session] was almost

at an end. He stated his intention to appoint a subcommittee to dig more deeply into the issue during the interim and return to it in January.

[9:49:24 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN, after conferring with both minority members on the committee, appointed the following members to a subcommittee on SB 6: Representative Kreiss-Tomkins, Representative Keller, and Representative Vazquez, with Representative Keller as vice chair. He invited anyone else on the House State Affairs Standing Committee to participate.

[9:50:20 AM](#)

CHELSEA GOUCHER, Executive Director, Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce, testified in opposition to SB 6. She stated concern that with the passage of SB 6, when the rest of the country shifts to Daylight Saving Time, Alaska would be two hours behind Seattle, and southbound cruise ships would have to leave an hour earlier to achieve parity with Pacific Daylight Time. She echoed the testimony of Ms. Mackey that as a result, Ketchikan could lose \$9 million. Further, she expressed concern that when the rest of the country returned to Standard Time, it would complicate communications - particularly the scheduling of teleconferences and appointments. She said businesses in Alaska might have to shift their start times to earlier in the day for half the year, and then switch back, in order to not lose valuable time with partners on the East Coast.

MS GOUCHER said under SB 6, sunset during the summer months would occur an hour earlier, which would detrimentally impact flight operations, marine charters, shore businesses, and "the safety of shift worker transportation." She said individuals would lose opportunities for recreational activities, and those who depend upon subsistence activities would suffer, both culturally and economically, with the earlier onset of darkness. She said commercial fishermen would be forced to shift their schedules to wake up by 2 a.m. or 3 a.m., in order to maximize their fishing time. She warned there would be a rise in programming costs for transportation, shipping, logistics, and broadcasting businesses. Municipal governments, such as that in Ketchikan, would lose sales tax revenue because of losses in the tourism sector, and "the negative trickle-down effect will damage sales at those businesses, which support other directly impacted sectors." Ms. Goucher emphasized doing all that is

possible to protect those parts of the economy that generate revenue for the state and its people.

MS. GOUCHER said the only acceptable compromise would be to ensure that if Daylight Saving Time is repealed, Alaska would be moved to Pacific Standard Time; however, she said doing that would be complicated by the size of Alaska. She asked, "How would that [emphasis on "that"] impact Western Alaska?" She said populations such as Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, and Ketchikan must be able to do business with each other efficiently, and making multiple time zones would be an "equally messy proposition." She stated that the Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce feels strongly that the best option for all Alaskans would be to maintain Daylight Saving Time and continue operations as they currently exist. She asked the committee to consider the proposed legislation carefully and oppose the elimination of Daylight Saving Time.

[9:53:13 AM](#)

TOM WILLIAMS, Financial Officer, Ward Air, testified in opposition to SB 6. He related that he is also an owner of a vacation rental business. He noted that Ward Air is an on-demand charter air company that provides service to local people, businesses, government, and tourists. He opined that while the original bill version of SB 6 was harmful to Alaskans, the committee substitute passed out of the Senate could do more harm by potentially allowing for the possibility of many time zones for Alaska - a decision that could be made by the U.S. Department of Transportation. He said this could "reignite a capital move issue."

MR. WILLIAMS said he thinks there are four critical questions to ask when deciding whether to proceed with the proposed legislation. The first question is whether eliminating Daylight Saving Time would get rid of the annoying practice of changing clocks twice a year. He prefaced the second question by reminding the committee that the bill sponsor had said there really was no hard data relative to the concern about health issues, and he posited that it is incumbent upon the committee and the legislature as a whole not to make a significant change that would affect all Alaskans, based on no hard data. He indicated the second question would be whether eliminating Daylight Saving Time would result in healthy Alaskans. He answered probably some, but said it also has the potential for causing more health issues. He said total daylight hours do not change; the changes would be in regard to when Alaska goes to

work and gets off of work. He said gaining an hour of light in the evening and being able to enjoy outdoor activities is not only a benefit to businesses, but also to the health of every Alaskan. He talked about the effect of changing the timing of light on those with Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). He said most people are not going to get up at 3 a.m. just because it may be light out then, because "our cycles are not geared towards that." He stated that having as many evening hours of daylight in the summer is a health boon.

MR. WILLIAMS said the third question is: Would eliminating Daylight Saving Time have adverse effects on Alaskans? He said, "Absolutely. You've heard those reasons over and over again." He said there would eight months during which Alaska would be "two hours out of synch with the Lower 48." He added, "And obviously, it provides less time ... for business to provide light-dependent business services." He indicated the fourth question had to do with whether it would be beneficial to put Southeast Alaska on Pacific Time in order to alleviate "some of the economic problems." He said yes, but warned it may create more. He said he knows USDOT's focus is on economic activity, which he said he thinks is "a very important element of this." He said when he first came to Juneau, Alaska was on several different time zones. At that time there was a big effort being made to move the capital because it was difficult to effectively communicate or coordinate activities between Southcentral Alaska and the capital in Southeast Alaska. He said he thinks it would create a problem if the state were to end up with multiple time zones.

[9:57:37 AM](#)

MR. WILLIAMS, referring to the sponsor's remark that the proposed legislation is based on people and businesses can adjust, stated that "we're all Alaskans." He stated that there are some larger business interests, but he has a small business and he is an individual. He warned against pitting individuals against businesses. He said, "We're all Alaskans; we're trying to make this state work to all our benefit." He echoed Chair Lynn's comment that the state will be facing significant financial issues as it downsizes government. He said, "We are going to have a double whammy if this bill passes, and not just in Southeast, Alaska; it's going to be all over this state. If we were ever going to do it, now is not [emphasis on "not"] the time; now is the worst time." Notwithstanding that, he said if the committee felt compelled to move out some version of SB 6, he would recommend the bill be amended to ask USDOT to keep

Alaska on one time zone, but to consider "whether we go to Pacific"; and to not make any changes in Daylight Saving Time until USDOT would authorize us, as a state, to all go to Pacific Daylight Time."

[9:59:11 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER asked Mr. Williams to clarify if he thought the capital move effort in the past had been solely based on the state being in different time zones.

MR. WILLIAMS responded that his work back then had been related to legislative audits, and there were coordination issues brought forth by many people. He said he was happy to see Alaska go to "one consolidated time," because he said it was good for the state. He said he would hate to see it reverted back to a system that would divide the state again - not just because of the capital issue, but also for "basic internal state commerce; [the] same sort of ... commerce issues that we have with down south."

[10:00:29 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN stated that the committee had run out of time and would not hear further testimony at the present meeting.

[10:00:38 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN announced that SB 6 was held over.

[10:01:03 AM](#)

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House State Affairs Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 10:01 a.m.